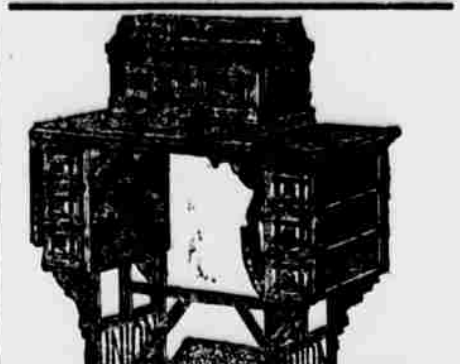


Merry Christmas to Our Patrons!

The Union Sewing Machine.
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1609 HOWARD STREET.

The
Only Machine Which
Will Sew
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AGENTS WANTED
in all
Unoccupied Territory.

The Union Sewing Machine.
The Union Sewing Machine.
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1609 HOWARD STREET.

MEXICO'S CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

The Holiday Habits of the People—
Observance of Pasqua.

SOME NOVEL PASTIMES.

Interesting and Instructive Ceremonies—The Passion Play for Unique Gifts—Holiday Gatherings—A Season of Great Pleasure.

Written for the Sunday Bee.

When asked what the Christmas customs of Mexico are, a whole flood of pleasant remembrances and customs come trooping over me like a gentle yule-laden with spring, time perfumes, completely blotting from my vision this chilly northern season which only the yule-log can cheer and the bitter-sweet can brighten; transporting with me, you who care to go to that ancient city, to wonder at her ardent Christmas sun, and to behold her people celebrate the birthday of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Several weeks before Pasqua (Christmas), the capital, with the exception of the plaza, assumes an elaborate Parisian toilet, garlanded and caught up, here and there, with Mexican ornaments and devices. The abounding stores are French, confounding the modest purchaser with their stores of costly wares gathered from far and wide. Curled and perfumed clerks handle wonderful Paris dolls which speak to one of their fathers and mothers across the water, flaunting their gay toilets in our faces. Costly bon-bon boxes completely grace one store, while the bon-bons lay temptingly strewn around them. Plate glass windows shield from black-eyed seniors with hair advantageously arranged, rare lace and fans, as well as exquisite devices in jewelry, and rather singular it seems, when these ornaments remain unsold they are shipped to Egypt, where a ready sale awaits them.

One store forms

A GLITTERING BANK OF GOLD and silver ornaments extending from the floor to the ceiling, interspersed with Christmas flowers. Truly this city is well named the "Paris of America." Yet, what one enjoys above all this rich effect at Christmas time is the skillful work of Mexican potters' fingers in the toys and remembrances for the pasadas, as well as their heartfelt sympathy in all the pleasures of this glad season. Presents for the pasadas occupy the portals and plaza, while hawkers of the same pretty articles carry them through the streets, rendering the air with their weird cries. Mexico does at this time as well as at all others, enjoy herself distinctly through the church, whose influence is mighty and far spread. For two weeks before Christmas are held nightly las pasadas, parties in commemoration of the birth of Christ. Friends meet at one another's houses, very much as we gather around the Christmas tree, where they form a procession in the decorated court of the house, marching around it and carrying at their head a miniature baby Christ lying on a pile of straw in a man child. On completion of this ceremony, the hostess presents each guest with a gift, then a member from out the whole is chosen, blindfolded and placed beneath a large earthen jar suspended from the ceiling, which is gaily decorated either with fluttering colored papers, or the bright skirts of an huge paper doll envelop it. This jar should be overflowing with candies, nuts and other good things, which are gaily scattered about the room, as the jar is broken, allowing the sweets to fall in a sudden shower among the laughing, scrambling guests. Dancing closes these evenings of

FESTIVITIES AT MIDNIGHT until the night before Christmas arrives, when they dance broad daylight in.

Valuable presents are often exchanged during the pasadas, though New Year's is the acknowledged day for the pleasant interchange of remembrances.

The great center of attraction at this time is the Plaza Mayor, which on this day is skirted by a double row of rudely constructed booths, facing each other, with a passage between for purchasers. The booths are attractive in their decorations of national colored papers, many possessing a little room in the rear where the Indian family live during the busy weeks, skillfully manufacturing with deft fingers, dolls and toys—many of which often pertain to the birth of Christ, such as statues of wax with the infant Saviour in the arms of Mary, Josephs without end of benign expression, flocks of snowy sheep led by the Good Shepherd, and all of the apostles in godly array. Peace seems to breathe from these rude booths. The murmur and hum of the surrounding capital is here broken by the babble of a gesticulating, excitable people, and by the shouts of gaudily attired toy vendors and lottery ticket sellers, the latter causing to lose

oftener than to make the coveted dollar. Dozens of little paper balls, seen in the breeze to be blown by smiling Indian girls with ducles of the country; furniture of inlaid woods cleverly executed for happy children; the rays and plates of intricate straw work forming really beautiful landscapes or churches and public buildings, attract the attention; toys without end, all well made by tows fingers. Evergreen boughs used during the pasadas lie around, for never as yet has the Christmas tree shed its bright candle rays on expectant children's faces. Mosses bank the ground from tender green to the grey, trailing moss gathered from the historical woods of Chapultepec. Embellished on this soft grey lie these brilliant flowers called la flor de la noche buena, the flower of the good night, or Christmas eve—a flower shaped something like our homely sunflower with a deep brown center from which radiate many long, narrow, scarlet leaves, below the flower. Gathered for Christmas eve, and it seems as though when the bells ring out jubilantly on the stroke of midnight that these flowers raise their bright heads in adoration to Him above.

Following the flowers, the candy booths, where, also, ducles of the country can be bought; sweet potatoes steeped whole in boiling sugar; bananas with the peel on, quite delicious, petrified by sweetness; crystallized cherries for the children; and a few other things, such as the case may be. They lend the fantastic side to this foreign scene as they float, bob and bow on the soft air to the eager

hand stand, float, strains of Christmas music. Under its magic influence we linger until darkness claims the scene. Then flaring torches light the booths and electric lights, the whole.

hire horse cars and start for pasadas in some suburban village, decorating the cars with flags, while lighted Chinese lanterns festoon them with light. They go singing on their way, breaking the darkness of the night.

When la noche buena (the good night, or Christmas eve) arrives, all Mexico is awake, is up to pay just tribute to the Divine Lender. But no jingle of sleigh bells, no frosty, crisp air strikes the ear, no hurrying footstep, no creaking, creaking snow, no rosy cheeks for awaiting the beaming of dawn for a slide down hill on the new sled, no wide-halled home with its mistletoe bough and trooping mid-

nightingales, big roaring fire, toasting apples. Instead, a warm summer night with a mellow moon sailing tranquilly over head. Within the plaza a band of music plays to a listening people, and the standing throngs radiate of its influence. Without the plaza are camped the vendors of toys and Indians from the country, forming picturesque groups, sleeping, kneeling and chanting around their simply constructed shrines, before which lighted candles burn, and the nightingales sing.

Flaming torches lend wildness to the scene, the moon, paths. Tread reverently among these low people, dignified by their worship of Mother and Son. As the hour of midnight strikes, the people sing hymns, and the cathedral and church towers ring out on the tropical night acknowledgment of the birth of Christ, and from every open church portal music of rejoicing streams forth. Parties of big playing smokers sit by strumming on gaily decorated tambourines, while in all of the aristocratic mansions they are dancing and feasting the night away.

Christmas is passed very much like every other day of the year. Big and little bells are rung at certain intervals throughout the glad day, and their churches, places of refuge from the storms of life, stand invitingly open to rich and poor alike, as all churches should be. The delicate whole ensembles give three grand performances through the day and evening, at reduced prices. In the afternoon "6 valientes toros a muerte." Six valiant bulls are to meet death on the morrow.

Thousands of this sport-loving people, FIREWORKS BOOM THROUGH THE AIR all day, as well as at night, and the French pastry shops fill the air with such a tempting odor that one needs must enter one to behold the rows upon rows of delicious pastries, round, or oblong and so tender that they cannot be resisted. Cake of fantastic mould and quite delicious little square thin wafers of cake filled with whipped cream, the delicate whole ensembles with frost-work of curiously wrought sugar. The smiling cook sells them and smile that these dainty, palatable things are just what one needs. But as one steps from the pastry shop with dejected spirit and air, for more money than was intended has gone to the pastry cook, the perfume of flowers greets you, again the pastry shop is before you, and you rejoice that your money fills the cook's pocket—for these flowers breathe of "Peace on earth, good will toward man."

GRACE DEANE HUNT.

Now the stormy clouds of winter Cover up the bright blue sky. And the iceman and the plumber Do not sleep as they pass. Through by daylight—The night. A bad sign—An illegible signature. Now that Christmas is here we should be

very careful not to look our gift horses in the mouth.

A watch that don't run doesn't need any chain. Failure in the yarn trade—writing unsuccessful novels. Many an old book has to be bound over to keep the piece.

The world owes us a living, but we have to enforce payment. The bucket-shops are kicking the bucket. They lost dead and have no future.

Amateur—No, an actor does not go to an iron foundry when he is cast for a part. Some men eat an ad dekhiteks, ob dar own fawchunes creek mighty crazy buildin's.

A man's credit is low down when he cannot obtain money under false pretenses. Adversity may try men's souls, but prosperity often grinds them to powder.

There is an athletic club in Indiana composed entirely of grocers. They are all light-weights.

St. Peter will open wide the gate for the man who in winter here on earth always shut the door.

"No, ma'am," said the grocer to an applicant for credit, "I wouldn't even trust my own feelings."

It is no great credit for the worm to turn when stepped upon. A barrel wheel will do the same thing.

It is said that the poet Goethe's death was hastened by his hearing an American pronounce his name.

In the Volapuk language the word for dollar is "below," and it will be just as hard as to borrow one.

Rejoice when your Christmas turkey makes a brave fight for life. The bravest are the tenderest, you know.

When the turkey and his cane at this writing the cane seems to have a trifle the best of it in the size of head.

If the hairs of every one's head are numbered, presume them on the back of the cranium are back numbers.

We met a man the other day who has had fewer all the year 'round. It breaks out whenever you ask him a question.

A Boston man has advertised the return of "a green lawyer's bag." Culture up that way is still a little ragged about the edges.

It is said that 300,000 people in France live apartments that have no windows. Those are the people who can safely throw stones.

Ruskin says: "Man should resemble a river." Some men do, in one respect, at least. The biggest part of them is their mouth.

Smythe, who lives in a boarding house, wants the old song, "Hold the Fort for I am I can't," changed to hold the piano forte till I can't.

One Ohio family were made ill by eating poisoned pie. One who would add to the already deadly character of the American pie by putting poison in it, is a fiend.

A Boston man said, "a Boston girl, 'a small portion of a Celtic distemper," "a which is it," said the waiter, "Irish stew, you stupid," answered she.

Impassioned Quoting (quoting Moore in the "Irish Stew") "Practical Girl—'It would give me rheumatism, and so it would you.'"

The merits of a new organ are thus described by a provincial newspaper: "The sold died away in a delicious suffocation, like one singing a sweet song under the bed."

Showing Rural (in a New York restaurant, "On the subject of a girl," Walter, bring us a bottle of champagne." Walter—"Yes, sir, Dry?" Young Rural (hotly)—"It's none of your infernal business whether we are dry or not. Just you bring it."

"Move on," shouted a west side citizen to a organ grinder, who had stepped in front of his house to exhibit the antics of his ape. "My mother-in-law has just left us this morning, and we don't want any more monkey business around here for a while."

A young German officer, rather new to his regiment, was drilling a squad of raw recruits, and gave the word of command: "At the right!" One of the soldiers by mistake raised his left leg, so that it joined closely to the right leg of his neighbor. "Don't forget," exclaimed the officer, "what Jackanapes has left both his legs!"

CAPITAL NEWS GATHERERS.

Some Personal Points About Correspondents at Washington.

AN UNWRITTEN CODE OF ETHICS.

How the Honor of the Profession is Guarded—Men Who Have Made Their Mark on the Row.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 22.—[Correspondence of the Bee.]—Over one hundred accredited newspaper correspondents and reporters will be admitted to the reporters' galleries of the senate and house in the Fifteenth congress. This is the largest number that has ever passed the scrutiny of the press committee who consider the applications and credentials of correspondents. The requirements for admission to the reporters' galleries have been carefully restricted. Just before the Fifteenth congress convened there was a mass meeting of the professional writers who apply for admission to the galleries, when what is known as the p-s-s committee was selected. This committee acts in co-operation with the chairman of the committee on rules in the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives and make up two distinct press committees, one for either branch of congress.

It is necessary at the convening of each session for every man who is admitted to the galleries to make application for a card. In his application the correspondent gives the name of the paper which he represents, the number of times in each week it is published, and the location of the publishing office. Besides this he declares that he is not engaged in the prosecution of any claims before congress; that he is not interested in any pending legislation, and is not an employee of the government.

During the last congress it was discovered that three or four men who were admitted to the reporters' galleries were interesting themselves in other business, pending before congress or furnishing information from the departments and the white house for the prosecution of claims, etc. The object in requiring applicants for cards of admission to the galleries to state specifically that they are not interested in any measure before congress and are not employed under the government, is to keep out of the space set aside for the press by those who do not do what a livelihood solely by writing for the press.

The press committee at its first meeting in this congress took into consideration charges which were filed against correspondents who were interested in pending legislation, or who were employed by the government, and after deliberation, rejected their applications for admission to the galleries. The committee also concluded to reject the application of at least one correspondent who was guilty of unprofessional acts. There is an unwritten code of ethics among the correspondents here just as high and as strictly adhered to as the most exacting code of lawyers and other professional men. This correspondent had sent circulars to editors asking them to publish his name in the dispatches and letters from Washington for prices, not only far below the lowest being paid, but which degraded the profession and in fact this man was offered to do work at such rates that would not have paid for the actual manual labor of a copyist, and the only manner in which he resorted to this was by employing young men who desired to learn the newspaper business without compensation. He is in the habit of asking at least one correspondent who would enter the profession of journalism, and respondents to his advertisements are informed that they can take a course of instruction in the business of journalism, and that he will pay for themselves. His journalistic colleagues about the same relation to the regular profession as the medical college of the celebrated Dr. Buchanan did to the regular profession of medicine. Besides this, which was the most serious charge, he was charged with the use of his position as a correspondent to represent claimants in direct tax cases, which was decidedly against the rules; and further, it is charged that he had used his position to secure a large number of subscribers to his paper, and that he had secured a large number of subscribers to his paper, and that he had secured a large number of subscribers to his paper.

It is absolutely essential for the honor of the profession in Washington that the correspondents should be of the highest caliber. The press committee is rigid in its requirements that no man who is likely to receive or give a bribe for professional services should be admitted to the galleries of the senate or house of representatives.

As a body the newspaper correspondents of Washington take the highest rank in the profession in the United States. A large majority of them are young men sent here from the home office of the papers they represent, and are generally college graduates, but there are a few who have been in Newspaper Row ever since the war.

Major John M. Carson, who is known Major Ben Perley Poore, who was the acknowledged dean of the profession, and who opened an office in Washington long before the war, and was formerly a member of the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette, is recognized as the leader. He is chairman of the press committee and probably wields a wider influence over the corps of correspondents than any man in it. General Ben Perley Poore, who was formerly a member of the Cincinnati Commercial Gazette, is recognized as the leader. He is chairman of the press committee and probably wields a wider influence over the corps of correspondents than any man in it.

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honors at the Military Academy and had the sand to decline a "soft snap" in the army, but chose instead hard work on the frontier. Major Carson is a man of dry humor, has travelled extensively, and is a thoroughgoing, all-around writer who has few superiors.

E. B. Wight is a short, thick-set, little gentleman, who, if he were more grey, would make an excellent Santa Claus. He is, perhaps, forty-five years old, does more real hard work than any of his associates, is an encyclopaedia of information, and has a "fad."

Mr. Wright's "fad" is scraps. His house is full of scraps. He has scraps on every subject. He has volumes, and volumes, and volumes of scraps. The collection and sorting of his scraps take up the greater portion of his life. It is said that he is more devoted to his scraps than to his children, but this is unfair. Mr. Wright has two of the handsomest, little boys in Washington. They are the grand-children of Colonel W. W. Clapp, of the Boston Journal, which paper Mr. Wright represents here, as well as the Chicago Inter-Ocean and the New York Post. Mr. Wright is also a member of the press committee.

Mr. Edmond Hudson, who writes the widely copied and rarely interviews and special articles for the Cincinnati Enquirer, and dips out more political notes than any other man in Washington. He is about forty-eight years old; medium height; inclined to be stout; black-haired, black-eyed and can tell the difference between a poker deck and the reverse version. "Black" has travelled extensively and is never happier than when pulling his little black mustache and relating a confidential mood, the incidents of his life.

The fifth member of the committee is Major F. A. G. Handy, who served in the army, and has been a member of the committee since the war. He was such a martinet and disciplinarian that military officers who were brought before him for discipline always regarded him as a playmate. He is a very short man, but his military life was well earned. At the tender age of seven he did excellent service for the union army by selling cartridges to the soldiers. He has been a member of the committee since the war.

Major Stofah (pronounce this Stofah) was born at Culpeper, Va., in 1856. Major Stofah is a man of dry humor, has travelled extensively, and is a thoroughgoing, all-around writer who has few superiors. He is a man of dry humor, has travelled extensively, and is a thoroughgoing, all-around writer who has few superiors.

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German papers in Washington. These are L. W. Haberman, a man of dry humor, who represents the New York Herald and St. Louis Westliche Post, and Paul Wolff, who was an engineer officer in the Austrian army, and is a thoroughgoing, all-around writer who has few superiors.

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